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JJGJr: 07-02

Paper No.8

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AUG 05 2002

OFFICE OF PETITIONS

In re Application of
Burbank, et al.
Application No. 09/981,525
Filed: 16 October, 2001
Attorney Docket No. 9619-1031

: DECISION ON PETITION
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This is a decision on the petition filed on 15 April, 2002, styled "Request for Corrected Filing Receipt," requesting that the filing receipt for the application corrected to reflect:

- the presence upon filing of three (3) independent claims (rather than the two (2) stated by the Office);
- a fourth-named inventor, **Martin V. Shabaz, Lake Forest, CA**; and
- the inclusion of a priority claim to Provisional Application No. 60/076,973 filed on 3 March, 1998.¹

said petition considered under 37 C.F.R. §1.53(b).²

¹ Although not express in the petition, the demand for inclusion of the priority to the provisional application is clear from the hand-written red-inked correction to that effect present on the copy of the filing receipt submitted with the petition--said correction being of the same form as those marked with reference to the other two corrections sought as detailed hereinabove.

² The regulations at 37 C.F.R. §1.53 provide, in pertinent part:

§ 1.53 Application number, filing date, and completion of application.

(a) *Application number.* Any papers received in the Patent and Trademark Office which purport to be an application for a patent will be assigned an application number for identification purposes.

(b) *Application filing requirements - Nonprovisional application.* The filing date of an application for patent filed under this section, except for a provisional application under paragraph (c) of this section or a continued prosecution application under paragraph (d) of this section, is the date on which a specification as prescribed by 35 U.S.C. 112 containing a description pursuant to § 1.71 and at least one claim pursuant to §1.75, and any drawing required by § 1.81(a) are filed in the Patent and Trademark Office. No new matter may be introduced into an application after its filing date. A continuing application, which may be a continuation, divisional, or continuation-in-part application, may be filed under the conditions specified in 35 U.S.C. 120, 121 or 365(c) and § 1.78(a).

(1) A continuation or divisional application that names as inventors the same or fewer than all of the inventors named in the prior application may be filed under this paragraph or paragraph (d) of this section.

(2) A continuation-in-part application (which may disclose and claim subject matter not disclosed in the prior application) or a continuation or divisional application naming an inventor not named in the prior application must be filed under this paragraph.

(e) Failure to meet filing date requirements.

(1) If an application deposited under paragraph (b), (c), or (d) of this section does not meet the requirements of such paragraph to be entitled to a

For the reasons set forth below, the petition is **GRANTED in part and DISMISSED in part**.³

Petitioner alleges that the failure of the filing receipt to reflect:

- a fourth named inventor, Martin V. Shabaz, Lake Forest, CA;
- the presence upon filing of three (3) independent claims (rather than the two (2) stated by the Office); and
- the inclusion of a priority claim to Provisional Application No. 60/076,973 (filed on 3 March, 1998);

are errors of the Office.

filings date, applicant will be so notified, if a correspondence address has been provided, and given a time period within which to correct the filing error.

(2) Any request for review of a notification pursuant to paragraph (e)(1) of this section, or a notification that the original application papers lack a portion of the specification or drawing(s), must be by way of a petition pursuant to this paragraph accompanied by the fee set forth in § 1.17(h). In the absence of a timely (§ 1.181(f)) petition pursuant to this paragraph, the filing date of an application in which the applicant was notified of a filing error pursuant to paragraph (e)(1) of this section will be the date the filing error is corrected.

(3) If an applicant is notified of a filing error pursuant to paragraph (e)(1) of this section, but fails to correct the filing error within the given time period or otherwise timely (§ 1.181(f)) take action pursuant to this paragraph, proceedings in the application will be considered terminated. Where proceedings in an application are terminated pursuant to this paragraph, the application may be disposed of, and any filing fees, less the handling fee set forth in § 1.21(n), will be refunded.

(f) *Completion of application subsequent to filing—nonprovisional (including continued prosecution or reissue) application.*

(1) If an application which has been accorded a filing date pursuant to paragraph (b) or (d) of this section does not include the basic filing fee, or if an application which has been accorded a filing date pursuant to paragraph (b) of this section does not include an oath or declaration by the applicant pursuant to §§ 1.63, 1.162 or § 1.175, and applicant has provided a correspondence address (§ 1.33(a)), applicant will be notified and given a period of time within which to pay the filing fee, file an oath or declaration in an application under paragraph (b) of this section, and pay the surcharge required by § 1.16(e) to avoid abandonment.

(2) If an application which has been accorded a filing date pursuant to paragraph (b) of this section does not include the basic filing fee or an oath or declaration by the applicant pursuant to §§ 1.63, 1.162 or § 1.175, and applicant has not provided a correspondence address (§ 1.33(a)), applicant has two months from the filing date of the application within which to pay the basic filing fee, file an oath or declaration, and pay the surcharge required by § 1.16(e) to avoid abandonment.

(3) This paragraph applies to continuation or divisional applications under paragraphs (b) or (d) of this section and to continuation-in-part applications under paragraph (b) of this section.

(4) See § 1.63(d) concerning the submission of a copy of the oath or declaration from the prior application for a continuation or divisional application under paragraph (b) of this section.

(5) If applicant does not pay one of the basic filing or the processing and retention fees (§ 1.21(l)) during the pendency of the application, the Office may dispose of the application.

(h) *Subsequent treatment of application - Nonprovisional (including continued prosecution) application.* An application for a patent filed under paragraphs (b) or (d) of this section will not be placed on the files for examination until all its required parts, complying with the rules relating thereto, are received, except that certain minor informalities may be waived subject to subsequent correction whenever required.

(i) *Subsequent treatment of application - Provisional application.* A provisional application for a patent filed under paragraph (c) of this section will not be placed on the files for examination and will become abandoned no later than twelve months after its filing date pursuant to 35 U.S.C. 111(b)(1).

[48 Fed. Reg. 2709, Jan. 20, 1983, effective Feb. 27, 1983; paras. (b) and (d), 49 Fed. Reg. 554, Jan. 4, 1984, effective Apr. 1, 1984; para. (c), 50 Fed. Reg. 31826, Aug. 6, 1985, effective Oct. 5, 1985; paras. (c) and (d), 53 Fed. Reg. 47808, Nov. 28, 1988, effective Jan. 1, 1989; paras. (b) and (c), 54 Fed. Reg. 47518, Nov. 15, 1989, effective Jan. 16, 1990; paras. (a)-(e) revised, 60 Fed. Reg. 20195, Apr. 25, 1995, effective June 8, 1995; revised, 62 Fed. Reg. 53131, Oct. 10, 1997, effective Dec. 1, 1997; para. (d) revised, 63 Fed. Reg. 5734, Feb. 4, 1998, effective Feb. 4, 1998 (adopted as final, 63 Fed. Reg. 36184, Jul. 2, 1998); paras. (c)(3), (c)(4) and (d) revised, 65 Fed. Reg. 14865, Mar. 20, 2000, effective May 29, 2000 (paras. (c)(4) and (d) adopted as final, 65 Fed. Reg. 50092, Aug. 16, 2000); para. (c)(3) revised, 65 Fed. Reg. 50092, Aug. 16, 2000, effective Aug. 16, 2000; paras. (c)(1), (c)(2), (d)(4), (e)(2), (f), and (g) revised and para. (d)(10) added, 65 Fed. Reg. 54604, Sept. 8, 2000, effective Nov. 7, 2000; para. (c)(4) revised, 65 Fed. Reg. 78958, Dec. 18, 2000]

³ Pursuant to Petitioner's authorization, Deposit Account 12-0201 (9619.1031) is charged \$130.00 for the petition fee herein.

The record reflects that:

- the instant application was filed on 16 October, 2001, with three (3) independent claims;
- the instant application was filed on 16 October, 2001, with a "Combined Declaration and Power of Attorney for Utility Patent Application," (oath or declaration) which document purports to contain three (3) pages signed by the inventors; however,
 - the copy of the oath or declaration filed with the instant application contained only two (2) of the three (3) pages, while a portion of the third page (which seems to include a reference to the fourth named inventor, Martin V. Shabaz, Lake Forest, CA) appears in the upper left corner of "Page 2 of 3" and the full third page was not included on filing; and
 - while Petitioner filed with the instant petition a copy of the oath or declaration and a copy of the receipt card date stamped by the Office:
 - the copy of the oath or declaration contained the identical reference (as described above) on the upper left corner of "Page 2 of 3," although the third page on this occasion was attached; and
 - the receipt card fails to detail the number of pages contained in the oath or declaration enclosed at and received by the Office upon filing;
- the reference and/or claim for priority to Provisional Application No. 60/076,973 (filed on 3 March, 1998) is contained nowhere in the record herein until Petitioner's attempt to amend filed on 11 April, 2002, over a 26 March, 2002, certificate of mailing--which certificate date is more than a month after the cut-off date specified under 37 C.F.R. §1.78.⁴

⁴ The regulations at 37 C.F.R. §1.78 provide, in pertinent part:

§1.78 Claiming benefit of earlier filing date and cross-references to other applications.

(5)(i) Any nonprovisional application or international application designating the United States of America claiming the benefit of one or more prior-filed provisional applications must contain or be amended to contain a reference to each such prior-filed provisional application, identifying it by the provisional application number (consisting of series code and serial number).

(ii) This reference must be submitted during the pendency of the later-filed application. If the later-filed application is an application filed under 35 U.S.C. 111(a), this reference must also be submitted within the later of four months from the actual filing date of the later-filed application or sixteen months from the filing date of the prior-filed provisional application. If the later-filed application is a nonprovisional application which entered the national stage from an international application after compliance with 35 U.S.C. 371, this reference must also be submitted within the later of four months from the date on which the national stage commenced under 35 U.S.C. 371(b) or (f) in the later-filed international application or sixteen months from the filing date of the prior-filed provisional application. These time periods are not extendable. Except as provided in paragraph(a)(6) of this section, the failure to timely submit the reference is considered a waiver of any benefit under 35 U.S.C. 119(e) to such prior-filed provisional application. The time periods in this paragraph do not apply if the later-filed application is:

(A) An application filed under 35 U.S.C. 111(a) before November 29, 2000; or

(B) A nonprovisional application which entered the national stage after compliance with 35 U.S.C. 371 from an international application

From the foregoing review of the record it appears clear, then, that the application:

- contained upon filing three independent claims;
- did not contain either:
 - the signed oath or declaration of the fourth named inventor ; or
 - the listing of the priority claim to the provisional application (which cannot be added in this context).⁵

In light of the foregoing, the petition herein is:

- granted in part to the extent that the instant application is forwarded to the Office of Initial Patent Examination (OIPE) with instructions to issue a corrected filing receipt:
 - setting forth the number of independent claims as three (3); and
 - listing the fourth-named inventor (now evidenced by the copy of the oath or declaration filed with the petition on 11 April, 2002) as Martin V. Shabaz, Lake Forest, CA; and
- dismissed in part to the extent that the claim for priority to Provisional Application No. 60/076,973 (filed on 3 March, 1998) shall not be entered as a result of the instant petition.

filed under 35 U.S.C. 363 before November 29,2000.

(iii) If the later-filed application is a nonprovisional application, the reference required by this paragraph must be included in an application data sheet (§1.76),or the specification must contain or be amended to contain such reference in the first sentence following the title.

(iv) If the prior-filed provisional application was filed in a language other than English and an English-language translation of the prior-filed provisional application and a statement that the translation is accurate were not previously filed in the prior-filed provisional application or the later-filed nonprovisional application, applicant will be notified and given a period of time within which to file an English-language translation of the non-English-language prior-filed provisional application and a statement that the translation is accurate. In a pending nonprovisional application, failure to timely reply to such a notice will result in abandonment of the application.

(6) If the reference required by 35 U.S.C. 119(e)and paragraph (a)(5)of this section is presented in a nonprovisional application after the time period provided by paragraph (a)(5)(i)of this section, the claim under 35 U.S.C. 119(e)for the benefit of a prior filed provisional application may be accepted during the pendency of the later-filed application if the reference identifying the prior-filed application by provisional application number was unintentionally delayed. A petition to accept an unintentionally delayed claim under 35 U.S.C. 119(e)for the benefit of a prior filed provisional application must be accompanied by:

- (i) The reference required by 35 U.S.C. 119(e)and paragraph (a)(5)of this section to the prior-filed provisional application, unless previously submitted;
- (ii) The surcharge set forth in § 1.17(t); and
- (iii) A statement that the entire delay between the date the claim was due under paragraph (a)(5)(ii)of this section and the date the claim was filed was unintentional. The Commissioner may require additional information where there is a question whether the delay was unintentional.

* * *

⁵ See: Dart v. Banner, 636 F.2d 684, 207 USPQ 273 (CADC 1980).

The application file will then be forwarded for processing as necessary.

Telephone inquiries concerning this matter may be directed to John J. Gillon, Jr., Senior Attorney, Office of Petitions, at (703)305-9199.



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